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THE EUROPEAN ANARCHY. By G. Lowes Dickinson. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916.

After nearly two years of painfully confused thought in regard to the causes of the war and of bitter controversy about the motives of the nations engaged in it, the idea that is beginning to be uppermost in the minds of many thoughtful persons is simply this: that not the insatiable greed nor the hypocritical selfishness of any one nation is responsible for the disaster, but the whole European system—the medieval conception of international relations which still prevails. We are still living, if not in the dark ages, in the age of Machiavelli—an age dominated by belief in necessary state selfishness and characterized by a self-perpetuating mutual suspicion between the nations of Europe. This idea is beginning to detach itself from the partial notions that have formed, so to speak, its matrix—from Utopian schemes of universal peace, from denials of the principle of nationality, from denunciations of secret diplomacy, from demonstrations of the economic interdependence of all nations.

The old order needs changing; for under it even the best and most chivalrous of nations can be but a knight-errant in a world of violence. It cannot, indeed, change all at once. But one may rationally hope that the conclusion of the present war may bring its passing appreciably nearer. According to what seems the soundest view, the first step would be the formation of a league of nations for the enforcement of international law and order, with a reservation of force for the coercion of the law-breakers. "Let the law-breaker be defined," writes Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson in his recently published book, *The European Anarchy*, "as the one who appeals to force instead of appealing to law and right by machinery duly provided for that purpose, and the aggressor is immediately under the ban of the civilized world, and met by an overwhelming force to coerce him into order." And, indeed, would Germany have entered upon the present world-conflict, for the beginning of which so many hold her responsible, if she had had any solid ground for faith in international justice, or even if she had known in advance the tremendous power that would be brought against her?

In order to effect the desired change, not merely new machinery is needed but a new point of view, a reform in the general way of thinking about international questions. When a patriotic Englishman can write with the moderation, and also with the freedom from visionary idealism, which is manifested in this book of Mr. Dickinson's, it seems that the change is nearer the possibility of realization than might be supposed. "I do not palliate the responsibility of Germany for the outbreak of the war," declares the author, "but that responsibility is imbedded in and conditioned by a responsibility deeper and more general—the responsibility of all the Powers alike for the European anarchy." The same spirit

of fairness is expressed in what Mr. Dickinson writes of the Kaiser: "According to Baron Beyens, on hearing the news of the murder of the Archduke the Kaiser changed color, and exclaimed: 'All the effort of my life for twenty-five years must be begun over again!' A tragic cry which indicates what I personally believe to be the case, that it has been the constant effort of the Kaiser to keep the peace in Europe, and that he foresaw now that he would no longer be able to resist war."

That view of European affairs which seems destined to prevail when passions have subsided and truth separates itself from doctrine, is expressed by Mr. Dickinson with a philosophic clearness, an intensity, and a restraint that should make his book a real force.

PRESENT-DAY CHINA. By Gardner L. Harding. New York: The Century Company, 1916.

Mr. Harding's little book stands quite apart from much that has been written about China in that it is neither a conventional study of events nor merely a series of more or less vivid impressions of Chinese life and character. In order to understand the awakened China of today, it is necessary first to know something of the people—not in generalities, but in specific human terms—and then to understand what the spirit of nationality is, and what its power may be not merely among the inhabitants of America and Europe but among the remoter dwellers in Asia. Mr. Harding possesses both kinds of comprehension. As one who has lived long in China and who has studied to attain a genuine understanding of the Chinese people, he has gathered plenty of significant observations. Through his grasp of the Chinese situation as a whole—and more particularly through his sympathetic understanding of the national spirit—he is able to interpret his observations convincingly.

The reader of Mr. Harding's book will be likely to revise the view, if he has entertained it, that the Chinese are foredoomed to vegetate for an indefinite period under an absolute and unprogressive monarchy. "The Chinese worship of monarchical institutions, for all the centuries, . . . is largely an illusion for foreign consumption. The Chinese have not even had a nobility, and their local government, which has been until recently the only government the people have felt, has been essentially democratic, even communistic in character." The awakening of the people, though slow and partial, has been real. Then, too, there have been concrete signs of national progress. The peril of bankruptcy, for example, has passed, and the "game of paying off old debts with new loans is almost over." The reader cannot but respond to the author's well-supported and not too sanguine conviction that the potentiality of China as a nation is immense. The significance of this hopeful view is seen when it is